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ACTION STR-00

INFO LOG-00 AF-00 AGRE-00 AID-00 CEA-01 CIAE-00 CTME-00  
INL-00 DODE-00 DOEE-00 ITCE-00 DOTE-00 DS-00 EAP-00  
EB-00 EXME-00 EUR-00 E-00 FAAE-00 UTED-00 VCI-00  
FRB-00 H-00 TEDE-00 INR-00 IO-00 L-00 VCIE-00  
NEA-00 NSAE-00 ISN-00 NSCE-00 OES-00 OIC-00 OMB-00  
EPAU-00 MCC-00 PER-00 GIWI-00 ISNE-00 SP-00 IRM-00  
SSO-00 SS-00 TRSE-00 FMP-00 BBG-00 EPAE-00 IIP-00  
SCRS-00 DSCC-00 PRM-00 DRL-00 G-00 NFAT-00 SAS-00  
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FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2696  
INFO AMEMBASSY ABUJA  
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO  
AMEMBASSY COTONOU  
AMEMBASSY DAKAR  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY  
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
USMISSION GENEVA  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
USDOC WASHDC

UNCLAS NDJAMENA 001737

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

USTR FOR FLORIE LIZER, BILL JACKSON, AND LAURIE-ANN AGAMA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [EAGR](#) [PGOV](#) [ETRD](#) [CD](#) [WTO](#)

SUBJECT: CHADIAN COTTON NEGOTIATOR ON HONG KONG MINISTERIAL

REF: A. N'DJAMENA 1706

[B](#). STATE 219191

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY. Chad's influential cotton negotiator sought to allay concerns about the Cotton-4 event at the Hong Kong WTO Ministerial in a meeting with us December 5. He also urged concrete actions to cut the domestic subsidy programs that hurt Africa's cotton producers. END SUMMARY

[1](#)2. (SBU) During a visit to Moundou in southern Chad December 5, E/C Officer spoke with CotonTchad Director General and President of African Cotton Grower's Association Ibrahim Malloum to convey points in ref B and discuss the African view of the USG proposal in the lead-up to Hong Kong. E/C Officer relayed U.S. concerns about the Cotton-4 event in Hong Kong on December 12. He also reiterated the USG commitment to assist development of the African cotton sector through its WTO proposal and technical assistance programs.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Malloum stated that the United States should not be worried about the event. He noted that the initiative is meant to highlight the importance of cotton for African economies. Malloum pointed out that African cotton producers understand that Hong Kong is meant to be a forum for negotiations, not contentious arguments. As a result, Africans would come to the table prepared to seek a compromise through constructive mechanisms.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Malloum also told E/C officer that Africans were very encouraged by the USG proposal, regarding it as a positive step toward correcting disparities in the world cotton markets. Malloum stated that African viewed the United States as a "great power with great responsibilities," and would applaud any USG effort to level the playing field for African cotton growers. He noted that the regular contacts by senior USG officials with their African counterparts demonstrate a willingness to communicate on the cotton issue, and were well-received by African officials. Malloum also pointed out that the Africans are disappointed by European efforts at enhancing dialogue in the run-up to Hong Kong.

[1](#)5. (SBU) Malloum stated that African cotton growers are nevertheless still skeptical of the USG proposal. They question that the cuts in domestic support will be implemented, given the strength of the U.S. farm lobby. Malloum referred to past declarations by the G-8 in Geneva in 2004 to treat cotton in a rapid and unique manner. He noted that there has been little recent action on the part of developed countries to develop a "transparent and fair" international market for cotton. He claimed that C-4

countries in the past year lost over USD 250 million, as a result of trade barriers by the United States and Europe. In the meantime, according to Malloum, the Americans and Europeans appear to be "playing cards" with their WTO proposals, each side trying to call the other's bluff and propose a package that neither side knew would be accepted by its domestic constituencies. He noted that if the developed countries are serious about alleviating the plight of African farmers, they would eliminate all barriers to cotton trade immediately.

16. (SBU) COMMENT: Malloum, an influential figure in deliberations on the African position on cotton in Hong Kong, had more conciliatory comments on the outlook for the ministerial than we have heard from him before. Yet despite kind words for the USG proposal, he also did not hide his skepticism that it will lead to serious cuts in domestic support. We must be prepared to handle questions from African representatives concerning the possibility of our proposal falling victim to domestic pressures. The Ambassador will have an opportunity to probe Malloum further in a lunch with him December 8.  
WALL

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